



# Long Term Care NEWSLETTER

Indiana State Department of Health

**ISDH Long Term  
Care  
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## Emergency Preparedness for Long Term Care Facilities

All long term care facilities are requested to submit to ISDH by April 1, 2009:

- their completed all hazards emergency preparedness plan;
- date(s) of staff training; and
- date(s) of exercise

For more information, please refer to the "*Implementing Health Facility Preparedness Plans*" section below.

## Review of Preparedness Conference

The Indiana State Department of Health thanks everyone that attended the September 23 Long Term Care Leadership Conference on Emergency Preparedness Planning. There were 916 registrants for the conference. The conference included information on all hazards planning, public health disaster procedures, developing emergency preparedness plans, and disaster planning for persons with dementia. A panel discussion with leaders of Indiana facilities affected by the recent disaster was enlightening as to the challenges faced by health facilities, staff, residents, and families during a disaster.

Speakers encouraged facilities to maintain readily accessible phone numbers for emergency preparedness officials. The Indiana State Department of Health maintains a 24/7 answering service for emergencies that will connect you with the Duty Officer. The Duty Officer can assist you in contacting staff in the preparedness, acute care, and long term care programs. The phone number for the after hours answering service is (317) 233-8115. During regular business hours you may contact the programs directly. Long Term Care can be reached at (317) 233-7445, Acute Care can be reached at (317) 233-7472, and Health Care Regulatory Services at (317) 233-7621.

## Implementing Health Facility Preparedness Plans

Communication and coordination of Preparedness Plans are critical parts of being prepared. The ISDH needs to know about and have access to a facility's preparedness plans, not for enforcement purposes, but to be prepared to assist facilities when an emergency occurs.

**ISDH requests that all long term care facilities develop a comprehensive emergency**

**preparedness/evacuation plan that addresses at a minimum the following:**

Contact information for local and state emergency departments and/or resources.

An emergency preparedness plan related to:

1. shelter in place;
2. evacuation (long and short term evacuation needs); and
3. recipient facility agreements (e.g., mutual aid transfer agreements).

The plan should address, at a minimum, the following elements:

- A system to identify residents and their specific needs and concerns. This system should include the manner in which the facility will keep the information current/updated and ready for implementation, if/when needed.
- Facility response for emergency/disaster that includes, but is not limited to:
  - identification of key staff responsible for executing the disaster plan,
  - identification of supplies and equipment needed, and
  - development of a communication system for residents, staff, families, etc.
- Development of a system that collaborates with the following:
  - suppliers,
  - other health care facilities,
  - emergency response teams,
  - transportation companies, and
  - community resources.
- Identification of issues related to staff availability and staffing needs
- Specifics/needs related to the emergency, whether shelter in place or evacuation, such as:
  - food,
  - water,
  - medications,
  - treatments,
  - medical records,
  - clothing/personal items, and
  - medical equipment.
- Transportation arrangements for evacuation, receiving and returning residents.
- Recovery plan, including reentry to facility.
- Communication responsibility with state officials.
- System to ensure security for contents of the facility throughout the emergency and recovery period.

**Following the creation and implementation of the emergency plan, the facility is requested to:**

- Train all staff on the emergency preparedness plan
- Perform simulated or actual exercises of evacuation plan, shelter-in-place and/or recipient facility plan. The exercise should include, but not be limited to:
  - Retrieval of ready-to-use system of resident identification/needs by designated staff
  - Retrieval of medications and medical records by designated staff
  - Contact of mutual aid facilities to confirm continued availability, if needed
  - Contact of transportation companies to confirm continued availability, if needed
  - Review of means by which evacuation would take place
  - Retrieval of necessary supplies/equipment used by the residents
  - Review of available emergency contact numbers and state officials
  - Review of staff contact numbers
  - Review of facility's emergency food and water supply
- Develop a system to review the disaster plan at least twice annually, including an actual exercise/drill.

**All long term care facilities are requested to submit to ISDH by April 1, 2009:**

- the completed plan;
- date(s) of staff training; and
- date(s) of exercise

Information should be forwarded to:

Burton Garten  
Indiana State Department of Health  
2 North Meridian Street, #5A  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
317-233-7948  
[bgarten@isdh.in.gov](mailto:bgarten@isdh.in.gov)

## HIPAA Guidance from the Office of Civil Rights

On September 17, 2008, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Civil Rights (OCR) published two new HIPAA Privacy Rule guidance documents – one for health care providers and one for consumers – that discuss when a health care provider may share a patient's health information with the patient's family, friends, or others involved in the patient's care. These new guides answer common questions about these permitted and important communications and target an area of the HIPAA Privacy Rule that is frequently misunderstood by health care providers and patients alike.

The provider guide is available at [http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/provider\\_ffg.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/provider_ffg.pdf).

The consumer guide is available at [http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/consumer\\_ffg.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/consumer_ffg.pdf).

For more information on the HIPAA Privacy Rule, including guidance on specific provisions, fact sheets, and frequently asked questions, please visit the OCR Privacy Rule Web Site at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa>.

## Alzheimer's Seminars

The Alzheimer's Association has announced a seminar to be conducted at sites around the state. The seminars begin October 27. The seminar, *Creating Moments of Joy for People with Dementia*, will feature Jolene Brackey. Ms. Brackey is the founder of Enhanced Moments and the author of "Creating Moments of Joy." There is no charge for the seminar. Program and registration information is attached for the [Alzheimer's Seminar](#).

For further information, contact the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Indiana at 1-800-272-3900 or visit their Web site at [www.alz.org/indiana](http://www.alz.org/indiana).

That is all for this week. Best wishes for the coming week.

Terry Whitson  
Assistant Commissioner  
Indiana State Department of Health